

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. In a pump having a rotary portion which compels the movement of a fluid by peristaltic compression of resilient tubing containing the fluid, a tube component comprising the following:
a plurality of adjacent resilient tubes;
a web interconnecting the adjacent resilient tubes.
2. A tube component in accordance with claim 1, wherein each of the resilient tubes has a cross-sectional centerline occurring in a common plane, and the web interconnects the resilient tubes in an area outside of the common plane.
3. A tube component in accordance with claim 2, wherein the rotary portion of the pump includes a rotary area of pump operation, and the web is outside the rotary area of pump operation.
4. A tube component in accordance with claim 3, wherein the resilient tubes and web are integrally formed.
5. A tube component in accordance with claim 1, wherein the resilient tubes are fabricated from an elastomeric plastic material.

6. A tube component in accordance with claim 5, wherein the tube component is installed in an ink supply system of a printer.

7. In an imaging system including a supply of ink and an ink motive mechanism adapted to transfer ink within the imaging system, a tube component comprising the following:

- a plurality of adjacent flexible tubes, each of the tubes having a first portion located within the fluid motive mechanism and a second portion located outside the fluid motive mechanism; and
- a tube retainer connecting the tubes together, the retainer being located on the second portions of the tubes and being adapted and constructed to maintain the tubes in consistent relative position.

8. A tube component in accordance with claim 7, wherein tube retainer comprises a web interconnecting the adjacent resilient tubes.

9. A tube component in accordance with claim 8, wherein each of the resilient tubes has a cross-sectional centerline occurring in a common plane, and the web interconnects the resilient tubes in an area outside of the common plane.

10. A tube component in accordance with claim 9, wherein the ink motive mechanism comprises a peristaltic pump having a rotary portion, wherein the rotary portion of the pump includes a rotary area of pump operation, and the web is outside the rotary area of pump operation.

11. A tube component in accordance with claim 10, wherein the resilient tubes and web are integrally formed.

12. A tube component in accordance with claim 11, wherein the resilient tubes are fabricated from an elastomeric plastic material.

13. A method of assembling a pump having a rotary portion which compels the movement of a fluid by peristaltic compression of resilient tubing containing the fluid comprising the following:
providing a plurality of adjacent resilient tubes; and
interconnecting the adjacent resilient tubes with a web.

14. A method in accordance with claim 13, wherein providing a plurality of adjacent resilient tubes comprises providing each of the resilient tubes with a cross-sectional centerline occurring in a common plane, and interconnecting the adjacent resilient tubes with a web comprises interconnecting the resilient tubes in an area outside of the common plane.

15. A tube component in accordance with claim 14, wherein the rotary portion of the pump includes a rotary area of pump operation, and interconnecting the adjacent resilient tubes with a web comprises interconnecting the resilient tubes in an area outside the rotary area of pump operation.

16. A tube component in accordance with claim 15, wherein the resilient tubes and web are integrally formed.

17. A tube component in accordance with claim 13, wherein providing a plurality of adjacent resilient tubes comprises providing resilient tubes fabricated from an elastomeric plastic material.

18. A tube component in accordance with claim 17, wherein the tube component is installed in an ink supply system of a printer.